DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 845 UD 029 680

TITLE	Realizing Our Nation's Diversity as an Opportunity. Alternatives to Sorting America's Children. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Common Destiny Alliance, College Park, MD.
SPONS AGENCY	Lilly Endowment, Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	37p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Ability Grouping; Academic Ability; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnicity; *Student Placement; *Track System (Education)

ABSTRACT

This report contains information shared with participants of the 1992 Common Destiny Conference, which focused on the consequences of academic tracking and other sorting practices that often result in the separation of children by race, class, or ethnicity. The conference also highlighted the latest relevant research on tracking and ability grouping. The report is divided into the following chapters: "Why America Believes in Tracking and How it Determines Students' Opportunities to Learn"; "Ollie Taylor's Story: How Tracking and Ability Grouping Affects Our Children"; "Alternatives to Ability Grouping"; "Effective Detracking: Implementing Alternatives"; "Lessons from Efforts to Detrack Schools"; "What Next? How to Promote Alternatives to Ability Grouping"; and "Why Ability Grouping Must End." Appendices contain lists of the Common Destiny Alliance organizational and research partners and the conference speakers and workshop presenters. (Contains 69 references.) (GLR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 369 845

Realizing Our Nation's Diversity as an Opportunity

Alternatives to Sorting America's Children

UD029650

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
W. D. Hawley
Common Destiny Alliance
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Realizing Our Nation's Diversity as an Opportunity

Alternatives to Sorting America's Children

FINAL REPORT TO THE LILLY ENDOWMENT, INC.

The Common Destiny Conference
September 9–11, 1992
Washington, D.C.

Common Destiny Alliance

A Publication of the
Common Destiny Alliance (CODA)
Willis D. Hawley, *Director*
Alma R. Clayton-Pedersen, *Assistant Director*
Center for Education and Human Development Policy
Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies
Nashville, Tennessee

Contents

FOREWORD		4
AKNOWLEDGMENTS		5
CHAPTER ONE	Why America Believes in Tracking and How it Determines Students' Opportunities to Learn	6
CHAPTER TWO	Ollie Taylor's Story: How Tracking and Ability Grouping Affects Our Children	9
CHAPTER THREE	Alternatives to Ability Grouping	13
CHAPTER FOUR	Effective Detracking: Implementing Alternatives	15
CHAPTER FIVE	Lessons from Efforts to Detrack Schools	24
CHAPTER SIX	What Next? How to Promote Alternatives to Ability Grouping	26
CHAPTER SEVEN	Why Ability Grouping Must End	31
REFERENCES		32
APPENDIX A	CODA Organizational and Research Partners	34
APPENDIX B	Conference Speakers and Workshop Presenters	35

Foreword

The Common Destiny Alliance (CODA) is a consortium of influential organizations and scholars who care about and work to end prejudice and practices that separate rather than unite the people of the country. (See Appendix A for a list of CODA organizational and research partners.) The Alliance seeks to encourage and assist child advocates, policy makers, school systems, colleges and universities, businesses, and others to view diversity as a resource that can help our nation attain goals such as improving economic productivity and the academic achievement of all children.

CODA identifies and promotes social policies and practices, especially those related to education, that encourage racial and ethnic understanding and cooperation and also capitalize on the potential for learning that diversity provides. The Alliance is an ongoing national effort to organize and sustain collective action that will result in organizations, scholars, and individual practitioners working to end policies and practices that separate us rather than unite us. Current CODA activities are funded by the Lilly Endowment, the George Gund Foundation, and the Carnegie Foundation.

In September 1992, CODA sponsored its first national conference, which focused on the consequences of academic tracking and other sorting practices which often result in the separation of children by race, class, or ethnicity. Held in Washington, D.C., at the Washington Court Hotel, the conference highlighted the latest relevant research on tracking and ability grouping and included major presentations by JoMills Braddock, Willis Hawley, Jeannie Oakes, Robert Slavin, and Anne Wheelock. The conference also included a series of "effective practice" workshops that were conducted by educational practitioners from thirteen elementary, middle, and secondary schools across the country. These workshops were designed to demonstrate ways that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds can learn with and from one another in heterogeneous classroom and school settings. (For a complete list of conference speakers and workshop presenters, please refer to Appendix B.)

This report contains information that was shared with the conference participants. We hope that it will be a useful resource for those interested in beginning, sustaining, or extending efforts to end harmful tracking and ability grouping practices in their communities and schools.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Common Destiny Alliance (CODA) gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following individuals in the preparation of this report:

PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

JoMills Braddock, II
Willis Hawley
Tari Hunt
Jeannie Oakes
Robert Slavin
Anne Wheelock

EDITORS

Alma Clayton-Pedersen
Robert Saffold, Jr.

CODA also wishes to recognize the generous support of the LILLY ENDOWMENT, INC., for sponsoring the Common Destiny Conference and for underwriting the publication of this report.

CHAPTER ONE

Why America Believes in Tracking and How it Determines students' Opportunities to Learn

Since the 1920s, most American schools have grouped students by their assumed academic ability. Ability grouping for courses and sets of courses is also referred to as tracking. Tracking has seemed logical because it supports a nearly century-old belief that a crucial job of schools is to prepare students for an economy that requires workers with widely differentiated knowledge and skills. Thus, demanding academic classes could prepare those students heading for jobs that require college degrees, while more rudimentary academic classes and vocational programs could make other students ready for less-skilled jobs or for technical training after high school.

Furthermore, policy makers, educators, and the public have judged tracked schools that prepare students for different work lives to be appropriate and fair, given perceived differences in students' intellectual abilities, motivation, and aspirations. Tracking is closely connected to testing, since many tests were created during the early part of the century precisely to sort students "scientifically" into different tracks. With the development of standardized tests for placement, most people viewed a tracked curriculum with its "ability grouped" academic classes as functional, scientific, and democratic—an educationally sound way to accomplish two important tasks: (1) providing students with the education that best suits their abilities, and (2) providing the nation with the array of workers it needs.

Despite its widespread use, there is no question that tracking, the assessment practices that support it, and the differences in educational opportunity that result from it limit many students' schooling opportunities and life chances. These limits affect school children from all racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groups; however, schools far more often judge African American and Latino students to have learning deficits and limited potential compared to their white counterparts. Thus, it is not surprising that schools disproportionately place these students in low-track, remedial programs that provide them with restricted educational opportunity.

Educators justify these placements by pointing out that children from these groups typically perform less well on commonly accepted assessments of ability and achievement. Moreover, conventional school wisdom holds that low track, remedial, and special education classes help these students, since they permit teachers to target instruction to the particular learning deficiencies of low-ability students. Research about human capacity and learning suggests, however, that conventional placement tests measure only a very narrow range of students' abilities; in particular, they provide little information about students' higher order cognitive abilities, such as how well they generate ideas or solve problems, or how well they can accomplish real-world tasks (Wigdor and Garner, 1982). Furthermore, students do not profit from enrollment in low-track classes: they do not profit as much as comparably skilled students in heterogeneous classes, and they have less access than other students to knowledge, engaging learning experiences, and resources (see Oakes, Gamoran, and Page, 1991, for a review).

In what follows, we will elaborate the complex links among race, tracking, and the culture of schools that make tracking practices so difficult to change.

"As the twig is bent...": Tracking in Elementary and Middle School

Testing and tracking often begin as students first enter school. Over the past decade, a growing number of local school systems have begun to administer "readiness" tests to select some five-year-olds for the academic demands of kindergarten, others for a less academic pre-kindergarten class, and still others to stay at home and wait another year. Many systems also use such tests to guide placement decisions about first graders. Because children's prior academic learning opportunities have considerable influence on their scores, it comes as no surprise that children with academically-rich pre-school and school-like home environments do better on such tests and are more likely to be judged as developmentally "ready" for "regular" kindergartens and suited for high-ability first grade classrooms. Black and Latino students are more likely than whites to have less educationally advantaged pre-school opportunities, and thus, on average, they score less well than whites (Ellwein and Eads, 1990). Hence, it is no surprise that we find

disproportionate numbers of young minority children in special "transitional" classes, in separate programs for "at risk" children, and in other types of low-ability primary classrooms. Even more troublesome, these "readiness" tests are not sufficiently accurate to be used as a basis for placement decisions, nor do they predict whether children will succeed in a particular placement (Shepard, in press).

Tracking propels children through the system at different speeds—even though the slower paced groups have as their goal "catching-up." For example, in reading, low groups spend relatively more time on decoding activities, whereas high groups move on to consider the meanings of stories and progress farther in the curriculum. High-group students do more silent reading and, when reading aloud, are less often interrupted than low-group students. This high-group advantage accumulates as the years pass, and students with a history of membership in high-ability groups are more likely to have covered considerably more material by the end of elementary school (Oakes, Gamoran, and Page, 1991).

In this way tracking in the elementary grades determines much of what happens later. Differences in pace through a sequenced curriculum (particularly in mathematics and reading) lead to differences in coverage. As a result, children fall further and further behind and are exposed to increasingly different curricula. These differences help stabilize students' track placements. Before very long, students in slower paced groups lack the prerequisite curricular experiences needed to qualify (that is, score well on tests) for faster groups or to succeed in faster or higher groups. Moreover, they are likely to have internalized the judgment that they are less able and less likely to succeed, and as a consequence, are no longer eager to put forth the hard work it might take to do well in a higher-ability class (Rosenholtz and Simpson, 1984).

". . . So grows the tree": Secondary School Tracking

Early in the middle school years, there begins an intentional shift away from the goal of propelling kids through the same curriculum at different speeds. Instead, traditional junior high and middle schools—still relying on slow, special, and remedial classes—change their intentions for students. Now, not only is the speed different, so is the direction. Rather than being propelled through the same curriculum at different speeds—albeit with much missed by those in slower groups and classes—students are pulled intentionally through different curricula toward different "endpoints"—different high schools and different post-high school expectations. Increasingly, these different destinations influence judgments about appropriate placements and course taking. Students are counseled into different courses with different names—sometimes prefixed with "basic," "regular," "pre-," "honors," or "gifted"—and clearly different in content and rigor (for example, slower-track students taking a crafts elective instead of a foreign language). Now, the differentiated curriculum conforms to the larger social purpose of preparing students for different futures. This creates even greater curricular differences than would be expected from differences in pace and consequent losses in coverage alone.

As students proceed through middle and high schools, increasingly disproportionate percentages of African American and Latino student are enrolled in low-ability tracks (Braddock, 1989; Oakes, 1990; Oakes, Gamoran, and Page, 1991). For example, Oakes (1990) found that all-minority secondary schools enroll far greater percentages of their students in low-track classes compared to all-white schools, and in racially-mixed schools the concentration of minority students in low-track classes is dramatic. For example, 66 percent of the science and mathematics classes with disproportionately large minority enrollments (compared to their representation in the student body as a whole) were low-track, compared with only 5 percent of the disproportionately white classes. In contrast, only 9 percent of the disproportionately minority classes were high track, compared to 57 percent of the disproportionately white classes. These findings were echoed in a recent study of the effects of middle-school tracking in six high-minority, urban districts which found that minority students were over represented in low-track math classes (23 percent compared to only 8 percent of the white students) and under-represented in high-track classes (36 percent of the minorities compared to 56 percent of whites) (Villegas and Watts, 1991).

In part, these disproportionate placements stem from real differences in minority and white students' opportunities and achievements in elementary school—differences that are often a consequence of earlier tracking. These differences—and disproportionate placements—are exacerbated by the reliance of schools on standardized tests in making tracking decisions. Even though such tests underestimate minority students' capabilities, they often carry more weight in the tracking decision than information about students' past classroom performance or teachers' recommendations, particularly when students move into new schools where counselors may have little or no contact with students' former teachers (Oakes, Selvin, Karoly, and Guiton, 1992; Villegas and Watts, 1991).

At least two additional and related factors play a role in creating the racially skewed pattern of track placements. One is the pervasive stereotypical expectations that society and schools hold for students of different racial, ethnic, and income groups that can negatively influence the placement of minority students with marginal test scores (for example, "Latino parents don't care much about their children's school achievement and are

unlikely to help their children at home" or "Black students are lazy"). A second is "politicking" by savvy parents who want their children placed in the best classes. Middle class parents, who are disproportionately white, better understand the inequalities in the school structure and feel more confident that the school will respond positively to their pressure (Oakes, et al, 1992; Useem, 1990). Students from different backgrounds sometimes receive different information, advice, and attention from counselors and teachers. While many secondary schools claim that students "choose" their tracks, low-track, minority students most often report that others made decisions for them (Villegas and Watts, 1991).

Why does this matter? Low-track courses consistently offer less demanding topics and skills, while high-track classes typically include more complex material. Teachers of low-track classes give less emphasis than teachers of other classes to such learning goals as developing a rich understanding of basic science and mathematical concepts, encouraging students' interest in math and science, enhancing their inquiry skills and problem-solving ability, and preparing them for further study in these subjects (Oakes, 1990). These differences in emphasis are substantial and cannot be construed merely as a "fine tuning" of the curriculum to accommodate individual differences. Moreover, these learning goals need not depend on students' prior knowledge or skills. To the contrary, math and science educators increasingly see these goals as essential for all students—regardless of their current skill levels. High-track teachers in all subjects often stress having students become competent and autonomous thinkers. In contrast, low-track teachers place greater emphasis on conformity to rules and expectations (Oakes, 1985).

Teaching strategies differ in ways consistent with this pattern of curricular disadvantage. Teachers allocate less time to instruction (as opposed to routines, discipline, and socializing) in low tracks, and learning activities more often consist of drill and practice with trivial bits of information, seat work, and worksheet activities. When technology is introduced in low tracks, it is often in conjunction with low-level tasks, such as computation. Computer activities, for example, often mimic texts and worksheets (Oakes, Gamoran, and Page, 1991). Low-track teachers tend to control tightly their students' opportunities, activities, and interactions. Furthermore, while these disadvantages affect all of the students in the class, low-track minority students may be especially disadvantaged because teachers may treat them less favorably. For example, Villegas and Watts (1991) found that in racially-mixed, low-track classes, teachers focused their interactions with minority students on behavioral, rather than educational concerns (6 times more often than with whites), by both telling students what to do (3 times more often for minorities than for whites) and by criticizing them (5 times more often).

Since many schools track their teachers as well as their students, low-track students have less exposure to well-qualified teachers. While some schools rotate the teaching of low-and high-ability classes, it is more typical for teachers to jockey among themselves for high-track assignments, or for principals to use class assignments as rewards and sanctions. Such political processes work to the detriment of low-track students, since the least well-prepared teachers are often assigned to low-track students. For example, teachers of secondary low-ability science and mathematics classes are usually less experienced, less likely to be certified in math or science, hold fewer degrees in these subjects, have less training in the use of computers, and less often report themselves to be "master teachers" than their colleagues in upper-track classes. These differences are particularly troublesome for students in schools with large minority and low-income populations because these schools have fewer well-qualified teachers to begin with. In such schools, for example, low-track students are frequently taught math and science by teachers who are not certified to teach those subjects, if they are certified at all (Oakes, 1990).

These track-related differences have pernicious consequences stemming from conceptions and judgments about human capacity and individual differences that connect with students' race and social class. These inequalities are not educationally-appropriate adaptations to variation in students' learning aptitude, speed, or style. Not surprisingly, the combination of separating students into different groups and providing different knowledge and learning conditions to these groups affects achievement. When schools track, low-track students—disproportionately African American and Latino—get less and learn less. Moreover, tracking systems signal very loudly that the school regards minorities as less intelligent than whites—judgments that students often internalize.

CHAPTER TWO

Ollie Taylor's Story: How Tracking and Ability Grouping Affects Our Children

The only thing that matters in my life is school, and there they think I'm dumb and always will be. I'm starting to think they're right. Hell, I know they put all the Black kids together in one group if they can, but that doesn't make any difference either. I'm still dumb. Even if I look around and know that I'm the smartest in my group, all that means is that I'm the smartest of the dumbest.

Upper tracks? Man, when do you think I see those kids? I never see them. Why should I? Some of them don't even go to class in the same building with me. If I ever walked into one of their rooms they'd throw me out before the teacher even came in. They'd say I'd only be holding them back from their learning. (Cottle, 1974, p. 24)

The quotation above is an excerpt of a conversation with Ollie Taylor, an eleven-year-old African American boy in Boston who had recently been assigned to the low track in his school. In this conversation, Ollie illustrates many of the problems and dilemmas of ability grouping, especially in integrated schools. First, and most obviously, Ollie reminds us of the shame of being assigned to the low track. At age 11, Ollie has presumably had a great deal of information about his capabilities relative to other students. He may know that he was keeping up with them, but also presumably knows that he is not one of the top achievers. Yet assignment to the low track puts a stamp on him that is altogether different from anything that he learned about himself in heterogeneous classes.

Secondly, Ollie reflects the belief that the low track is especially designed for black students like himself, that race is one factor in assignment to tracks.

Third, Ollie discusses the profound division between students in high and low tracks, describing a feeling that students and teachers alike would "throw him out" if he dared to trespass on their area of the school.

Ability grouping has several forms, all of which sort children into different learning environments based on evidence or assumptions about a student's academic performance. Among the forms of ability grouping by which children's learning opportunities are sorted and thereby differentiated are tracking, misassignment to special education, more or less permanent assignment to groups within classrooms, retention in grade, and differences in teacher expectations and curriculum coverage. In addition, children may be sorted *among* schools because of differences in the socioeconomic characteristics of the communities served or because of their assignment to schools established for students who are defined as having special needs and problems.

In the following review of research, we will examine policies and practices that result in placing students in groups that are more or less homogeneous with respect to academic performance.

Effects of Ability Grouping[1]

Ollie Taylor's experiences and feelings are not unusual. They are not unique to African American students or to other minority students. A recent longitudinal study (Braddock & Slavin, 1992) shows the pervasive negative effects of ability grouping for *all* students. In this analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS:88), the authors provide unusually rich information on ability grouping practices and student outcomes in a nationally representative sample of schools and students. They looked at eighth graders who attended schools in which ability grouping was or was not used, and then examined many outcomes for these students in the tenth grade, statistically controlling for prior course grades and standardized test scores, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, school size, and other variables. High, average, and low achievers in the tracked schools were compared to their counterparts in the untracked schools.

The results were striking. Students in the low track performed significantly less well than did similar low achievers in untracked schools on composite and core subject achievement tests (reading, mathematics, science

[1] We use the term "ability grouping" because it is commonly used, but we note that this term usually is applied to assessments of performance which may or may not be closely related to actual ability or capacity. The term is also used interchangeably with the term "tracking."

and social studies). Yet there was no consistent corresponding benefit of ability grouping for high or average achievers. Put another way, Ollie Taylor's pain was no one's gain.

Test scores were not the only indicators of the negative effects of tracking. Low-track eighth graders were much more likely to end up in non-college preparatory programs in the tenth grade than were untracked low achievers. This effect suggests that being in the low track in eighth grade slams the gate on any possibility that a student can take the courses leading to college. The gate remained open for equally low achieving eighth graders who had the good fortune to attend untracked schools.

Like Ollie Taylor, low-track students in this study had lower self-esteem than did untracked low achievers, and had markedly less positive perceptions of intergroup relations in their schools. Again, these negative impacts were not offset by any positive effects on any outcomes for high or average achievers.

This analysis of NELS:88 data provides the largest, best-controlled multi-year study of ability grouping ever conducted. The effects of ability grouping have been studied for seventy years, however, and the outcomes of scores of studies have been similar to what was found in this study. The following sections review research on the main outcomes of ability grouping.

Opportunities to Learn

Students cannot learn what they have not been taught. One of the clearest outcomes of ability grouping at all instructional levels is that students in low ability groups are exposed to substantially less material and to lower quality instruction than are students in middle or high ability groups (Oakes, Gamoran, & Page, 1991). The pace of instruction is slower in low reading groups (Barr & Dreeben, 1983; Gamoran, 1986) and in low track classes in middle and high schools (Page & Valli, 1990). Further, students in low ability groups are likely to be exposed to more low-level basic skills than are students in middle and high groups (Hiebert, 1983; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Oakes, 1985). Even more to the point, low achievers in tracked settings are exposed to far less content and to lower level content than are similarly low achieving students in mixed-ability classes (Oakes, 1991). In fact, Oakes (1985) found that the level and pace of instruction provided to heterogeneous middle school classes was like that given to the top track in tracked schools. The presence of low achievers in heterogeneous classes does not cause teachers to slow down or "dumb down" their curriculum; instead, it appears to allow low achievers to benefit from the same richer and faster-paced curriculum traditionally offered to the top track.[2]

[2]This is not to say that instruction in top track classes is optimal for high achievers or anyone else.

Ability Grouping and Achievement

In the long history of research and debate on the effects of ability grouping, the same essential arguments have been advanced on both sides (see Slavin, 1990a). Proponents of ability grouping have claimed that grouping is necessary to individualize instruction for students and to accommodate their diverse needs. In particular, they have been concerned about the possibility that including low achievers in heterogeneous classes would slow down the progress of high achievers, and they have claimed that high achievers benefit from the challenge and example of other high achievers. In contrast, opponents of ability grouping have been concerned about the negative effects of the practice on low achievers, in particular denying them access to high-quality instruction, and have opposed the practice on principle as undermining social goals of equity and fairness in our society. There is an interesting lack of parallelism in these arguments. The pro-grouping argument is primarily concerned with *effectiveness*, while the anti-grouping argument is primarily concerned with *equity* and democratic values. Consequently, the burden of proof in terms of effectiveness must be on those who would track.

Clearly, ability grouping fails to meet this burden of proof. Reviews of research on ability grouping in elementary schools (Slavin, 1987) and in secondary schools (Slavin, 1990a) have failed to find any positive effects of between-class ability grouping for any subgroup of students. These reviews consider studies done in all types of schools over many years. Many of the studies used either random assignment to ability grouped or nongrouped classes or case-matching procedures to ensure that the grouped and ungrouped classes were identical in prior performance. Not only were *average* achievement levels no better in ability grouped classes, but hardly any individual studies find educationally meaningful positive effects. Trivial differences on achievement measures (less than 10% of a standard deviation) have been found for high, average, and low achievers. All reviewers of studies comparing ability grouped and nongrouped classes agree that there are no overall positive effects of ability grouping on achievement (see, for example, Esposito, 1973; Good & Marshall, 1984; Kulik & Kulik, 1982, 1984a; Gamoran, 1986).

There is some disagreement about differential effects for high and low achievers, however. Some studies, such as the recent reanalysis of the NELS:88 data (Braddock & Slavin, 1992) and a similar longitudinal study by Hoffer (1991) found significantly negative effects of ability grouping for low achievers, with no corresponding advantage for high achievers. Others, such as Fuligni, Eccles, & Barber (1990), found small positive effects of ability grouping for high achievers, negative for low. Most studies comparing ability grouped and ungrouped students find no difference in achievement (Slavin, 1987, 1990a). There is only one aspect of ability grouping

research that engenders serious debate concerning achievement effects. This has to do with effects of programs for the gifted. There is general agreement that *acceleration* programs are effective. For example, gifted seventh graders who take Algebra I (usually given to students in ninth grade) perform far better on Algebra tests and little worse on Math 7 tests than equally bright students who take Math 7 (Fox, 1979; Kulik & Kulik, 1984b). There is little reliable evidence, however, to favor the far more common enrichment programs often provided to gifted students (Slavin, 1990b, 1991a). Research in this area often appears to favor enrichment programs because it fails to control adequately for student ability levels, but well-controlled randomized studies are few and fail to support separate programs for the gifted (for example, Mikkelson, 1962).

Whatever the effects of programs for the gifted, it is important to keep in mind the fact that such programs only apply to 3-5% of students. No serious reviewer suggests that there are educationally important positive effects of comprehensive ability grouping plans for a broader range of high achievers (for example, the top 33% of students). Even if there were evidence in favor of enrichment programs for the gifted, there would still be no evidence whatsoever to deny that such enrichment programs might be effective for *all* students, not just gifted ones.

Ability Grouping and Segregation

One of the most consistent impacts of ability grouping is the creation of classes that have disproportionate numbers of students from different racial or social class groups. As Ollie Taylor put it, "I know they put all the Black kids together in one group if they can." In high schools, Black and Latino students are greatly overrepresented in the vocational track and underrepresented in academic programs (Braddock, 1989). These groups are also overrepresented among the low tracks in junior high and middle schools (for example, Jones, Erickson, & Crowell, 1972), and in low reading groups in elementary school (for example, Haller, 1985). Further, the U.S. Office of Civil Rights has estimated that more than half of U.S. elementary schools have at least one "racially identifiable" classroom in its highest or lowest grade. A racially identifiable classroom is one in which the proportion of students of a given race in a class is substantially different from that in the school as a whole. This is considered an indication of discriminatory ability grouping (see Wenning, 1992). Leaving aside race and ethnicity, students from low socioeconomic circumstances are also greatly overrepresented in the low tracks (for example, Heyns, 1974; Alexander, Cook, & McDill, 1978).

Ability Grouping and Intergroup Relations

Until recently, relatively little was known about the direct effect of ability grouping on attitudes among students of different ethnicities. One early study compared interethnic attitudes in ability grouped and heterogeneous sixth grades in New Mexico schools containing Latino and Anglo students. Intergroup attitudes were consistently higher in the heterogeneous classes (Sarthory, 1968). The effects of between-class ability grouping are certainly much more profound than this, however. By separating students into classes that are predominately composed of one or another ethnic group, ability grouping obviously limits the number of positive relationships that could possibly develop across ethnic group lines. Without such positive relationships, the development of broader interracial understanding and tolerance is unlikely (Allport, 1954). The evidence from an analysis of NELS:88 data (Braddock and Slavin, 1992) suggests that ability grouping has major consequences for both students' perceptions of race relations in their schools and their reports of "racist remarks."

Other studies show that student friendship patterns are closely linked to academic track placements in high school where students choose friends from within their own track (Alexander & McDill, 1976; Cohen, 1975; Rosenbaum, 1976), and even in the early elementary grades, students' opportunities for interaction with students of different abilities and races are affected by the teacher's choice of more or less resegregating classroom grouping practices (Epstein, 1985).

Ability Grouping, Self-Esteem, and Feelings of Inferiority

The most poignant aspect of the conversation with Ollie Taylor excerpted above was the degree to which placement in the low track made him feel inferior and worthless. A great deal of research shows that Ollie's feelings were not unique. Braddock and Slavin (1992) found students in the low track to have significantly lower self-esteem than low achievers in mixed-ability classes; there were no differences for middle and high achievers. Earlier studies have also found that in comparison to others, students in low tracks are low in academic self-esteem, even controlling for their actual achievement; they also tend to report feelings of inferiority, shame, and anger (Sarthory, 1968; Ogletree, 1968; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Rosenbaum, 1976; Persell, 1977; Oakes, 1982). In addition, tracked low achievers had more feelings that their fate was out of their hands (external locus of control) than did untracked low achievers (Braddock & Slavin, 1992).

Ability Grouping, Delinquency, and Dropout

The experience of being in the low track has many effects beyond low self-esteem and feelings of inferiority. Controlling for their achievement and other factors, studies have found that students in the low track are more likely to be delinquent than are other students

(Wiatrowski, Hansell, Massey, & Wilson, 1982) and are less likely to complete their education (Rosenbaum, 1976).

Summary

Arguments in favor of ability grouping depend entirely on the assertion that grouping is necessary to meet the unique needs of children of different performance levels, especially those of high achievers. Yet evidence from dozens of studies done over a sixty-year period has consistently failed to demonstrate any benefits of between-class ability grouping for students at any performance level. Given the segregative impact of ability grouping, the negative effects of grouping on such outcomes as self-esteem, delinquency, and dropping out, and the anti-egalitarian nature of the practice, there is little reason to maintain the between-class ability grouping practices so prevalent in American middle and high schools and not uncommon at the elementary level. The Ollie Taylor's of America deserve better.

CHAPTER THREE

Alternatives to Ability Grouping

While it is easy in concept to say that ability grouping should be reduced or eliminated, it is much more difficult in practice to bring this about. An old Russian analogy is appropriate: "It's easy to make an aquarium into fish soup, but hard to make fish soup back into an aquarium." American schools have been tracked for decades, and professional educators know few alternatives to the practice. Strong political pressures, especially from parents of high achievers, inhibit change. Teachers need to learn about, witness, and experiment with new practical methods for teaching heterogeneous classes, and parents, teachers, and students themselves need to be satisfied that a change from homogeneous to heterogeneous grouping will meet the needs of all students, including those of high achievers.

A few general principles of detracking seem to be worth stating at the outset. First, detracking must be seen as a part of an overall improvement in instructional practices and curriculum for all students. Detracking must never be or appear to be taking from high achievers to give to low achievers. Instead, it must be seen as bringing into the school methods and materials that are better for all students. Second, the expectations for student performance in detracked schools must be similar to those formerly characteristic of the top track. As noted earlier, Jeannie Oakes' (1985) observational research in homogeneous and heterogeneous middle school classes found that the pace and quality of instruction in the untracked classes was like that in the high tracks; schools undertaking detracking need to make certain that this is in fact the case and is *perceived* to be the case. For example, some schools that have successfully detracked have put their former gifted teachers in charge of helping all teachers to make all their (heterogeneous) classes "gifted" classes, in the sense that all classes can experience activities typical of enrichment programs for the gifted (see Wheelock, 1992).

The key goal of detracking should be to make the "top track" curriculum accessible to a broader range of students without watering it down. This may mean doing more active teaching and less seat work; using more projects and hands-on curriculum and less passive lecture; using more cooperative learning (see below); using more frequent curriculum-based assessments of student progress with adequate time allowed; providing low achievers with assistance (including adult and peer tutoring) closely linked to their classroom curriculum; and many other strategies. Note that with the exception of the last of these, all are generally considered effective strategies for all students, not only for low achievers (see, for example, Brophy & Good, 1986; Slavin, 1991b).

One alternative to ability grouping often proposed (for example, Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1990c) is the use of cooperative learning methods, which involve students working in small, heterogeneous learning groups. Research on cooperative learning at all grade levels consistently finds positive effects of these methods if they incorporate two major elements: group goals and individual accountability (Slavin, 1990b). That is, the cooperating groups must be rewarded or recognized based on the sum or average of individual learning performances. Cooperative learning methods have also had consistently positive impacts on intergroup relations (Slavin, 1985) and on such outcomes as self-esteem, acceptance of mainstreamed academically handicapped students, and ability to work cooperatively (Slavin, 1990b).

One category of cooperative learning methods may be particularly useful in schools that are moving toward heterogeneous class assignment. These are Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (Stevens, Madden, Slavin, & Farnish, 1987) and Team Assisted Individualization - Mathematics (Slavin, Madden, & Leavey, 1984; Slavin & Karweit, 1985). Both of these methods are designed to accommodate a wide range of student performance levels in one classroom, using both homogeneous and heterogeneous within-class grouping. These programs have been successfully researched in grades 3-6, but are often used up to the eighth grade level. Elizabeth Cohen's (1986) Complex Instruction and Sharan & Sharan's (1992) Group Investigation are also effective cooperative learning programs designed for use in heterogeneous classes.

In addition to cooperative learning, there are many other strategies known to be effective for students in general and likely to be particularly appropriate for

teaching heterogeneous classes. One is the use of active teaching strategies (Brophy & Good, 1986). A much broader range of students can benefit from engaging, active, well-organized lessons than can learn from worksheets and textbooks. Another such strategy is an emphasis on "constructivist" teaching, in which students begin with large, "authentic" problems and work together to discover how to solve them and, along the way, the more basic concepts underlying them (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). The use of "scaffolding," as in Reciprocal Teaching, can provide all learners with increased responsibility for their own learning and thereby can make success available to a broader range of students (Palincsar, 1986).

Extending learning time for low achievers can be a very effective means of helping them keep up with a demanding curriculum. Extra time embedded in the school day for preteaching or remedial work closely linked the students' regular classroom work can help low achievers succeed in heterogeneous, high-expectations classes (MacIver, 1992). Curriculum-based assessment and directed services to help at-risk children succeed can obviate the need for special education or separate remedial services for many children (Fuchs et al., 1990). The importance of effective assistance for low achievers is extremely important in detracking efforts, not only for the benefit of low achievers, but also to keep teachers from feeling as though they must slow down the curriculum. If detracking is to be effective for everyone and is *perceived* to be so, it must maintain a fast-paced, high-expectations curriculum for all students, and targeted assistance to low achievers must be part of this plan. Targeted assistance can be provided by peer tutors (Devin-Sheehan et al., 1976), volunteer tutors (Morris et al., 1990), special education or Chapter 1 teachers, or even computers.

None of the instructional methods that have promise for teaching heterogeneous classes can be mandated schoolwide next Monday morning. All require top-quality staff development over an extended period of time. Staff development programs should make extensive use of peer coaching (Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983) or other means of following up initial training sessions with in-class follow up from fellow teachers, expert coaches, or outside trainers. In addition, it is important to involve teachers in making decisions about how staff development will take place and, more generally, how the school will change to increase its effectiveness for all students. It is also important to see that teachers are able to make individual choices about whether to use particular teaching methods or curriculum materials. Detracking is fundamentally a school level decision; teachers and others should participate in making the decision, but once it is made, it will generally apply to the whole school or at least to whole grades within a school. It does not make sense, however, to require that *all* teachers use cooperative learning or within-class grouping or process writing or other methods.

Finally, detracking should begin where it is easiest to do so, in the earlier grades. In a district with high, middle, and low classrooms at the primary level, detracking should probably begin in these grades before the upper elementary and middle grades. In districts with heterogeneously grouped elementary schools, middle schools—not senior high schools—should be the focus of detracking efforts. The reasons for this should be obvious. First, it is important to move from success to success. A major push to detrack senior high schools may well fail on political or practical bases and thereby undermine the broader policy. Changes in grouping policies are much easier to carry out in the elementary and early middle grades. Also, it is difficult, though certainly not impossible, to detrack tenth graders who already have four (or nine) years of experience in tracked settings. Schools need to make a long term commitment ultimately to reduce or eliminate tracking, but to do so across the board, or in high school before elementary or middle schools, invites turmoil and possible failure.

CHAPTER FOUR

Effective Detracking: Implementing Alternatives

Thirteen schools that have effectively begun detracking were highlighted at the Common Destiny Conference. What follows is a description of the detracking efforts of each of these schools, along with the names and addresses of individuals who may be contacted for more information.

M. J. Abbett Elementary School
4325 South Street
Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46806
219-425-7301

Contact Person: Cornelia (Connie) Shideler, Principal
Level of Education: Elementary (K-5)
Total Student Enrollment: 340
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
41% African American
<1% Asian/Asian American
5% Latino
53% White
Size of Faculty: 15 classroom teachers, 2 special education teachers, 3 tutors, case manager, Chapter I Parent Liaison, "Success-for All" facilitator

M. J. Abbett Elementary School implemented the "Success for All" program in the fall of 1991. "Success for All" originated at Johns Hopkins University and is administered by the Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students there. The Ft. Wayne school system contracts with Johns Hopkins University to receive the "Success for All" services and materials

The concept behind "Success for All" is to organize resources to ensure that virtually every student will reach the third grade with adequate reading skills and that no student will be allowed to "fall between the cracks." The program uses reading tutors in first through third grades to work with the lowest achieving students one-on-one. Reading is taught to groups of similar ability children across grade levels, as in a non-graded school. Each student receives 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction each day.

Cooperative learning is the vehicle that drives the "Success for All" curriculum. Students work together in partnerships and teams, helping one another to become strategic learners. Emphasis is placed on equal opportunities for success, individual accountability, common goals, and rewards. In all grades, the Family Support Team is designed to work with parents by providing parent education and by involving parents in their children's schooling.

To become a "Success for All" school, at least 80% of the faculty must be in agreement with the goals of the program. There is a great deal of teacher training and inservice as the program is being implemented. The support of the faculty is thus essential for the program to work. At Abbett, the teachers were excited about becoming a "Success for All" school, but there were still a number of adjustments to make. Accustomed to teaching in self-contained classrooms, the team teaching approach was a difficult one to adapt to.

During the first year of "Success for All" at Abbett, parental participation at school and involvement with their children's schoolwork increased markedly. Parent participation was affected greatly by the work of the case manager and the Chapter I Parent Liaison. Student test scores also increased from the first of the year to year end.

Connie Shideler, principal, notes that they feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to implement "Success for All" at Abbett. The transition was a relatively smooth one, largely because the program itself is so well constructed, that it steered the school around some of the usual pitfalls of radical change.

For more information on the "Success for All" Program, contact:
Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students
3505 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-516-0274

Louis Armstrong Middle School
32-02 Junction Boulevard
E. Elmhurst, New York 11369
718-335-7500

Contact Person: Mary Ellen Levin, Principal; Elizabeth Ophals, Teacher
Level of Education: Middle (5-8)
Total Student Enrollment: 1333
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
55% Students of Color
45% Other
Size of Faculty: 83 Teachers, 4 administrators

Louis Armstrong Middle School opened in 1980 and has been heterogeneously grouped from the very beginning. The population is very diverse with students of 79 nationalities who speak 39 different languages. In 1991, the school became the recipient of a Federal Magnet School Grant which enabled the school to implement curriculum innovations focused on creating diverse, integrated learning environments.

A "Ways of Knowing" team of curriculum specialists is using some of the ideas of Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner to guide its efforts in implementing interdisciplinary learning. The team seeks to develop a range of student intelligences in ways that respect the diversity of student cultures and learning styles. In view of the project's major goal of developing an inquiry-based curriculum with a multicultural focus, a thematic approach is used to guide the work of the team. For example, teachers from seven disciplines (history, literature, linguistics, science, mathematics, music and video arts) led students to examine aspects of prehistoric life which culminated with the production of a number of artifacts, videotapes, and an elaborate performance.

There are two innovative mathematics programs in place at Louis Armstrong. One seeks to identify and nurture math talent in groups traditionally underrepresented in math-related careers — girls and minorities. Teachers serve as mentors to these students beginning in the sixth grade and provide support to them through the eighth grade. Parents are encouraged to be involved and are made aware of academic and career opportunities in the field. These efforts are funded by a Jacob Javits federal grant. The second math program is called "Improving Math through Music" and is funded by a grant from IBM. A state-of-the-art laboratory of computer synthesizer networks is used by the school's seventh graders.

Louis Armstrong Middle School has been able to draw on a wide array of resources available in the city. It has enjoyed a long-standing supportive relationship with Queens College and City University of New York. Moreover, the school has its own museum that is an integral part of the life of the students. Many thematic units culminate with a major exhibition in the museum, one of the many different student achievement assessment strategies used at the school.

The school has been successful in eliminating pull-out programs by sending specialty teachers into the classrooms. That has led to a decrease in stigmatizing a child as "slow" or "learning disabled" since there is not much distinction between types of teachers. One area of difficulty is that the state (New York) recommends accelerated courses for seventh and eight graders. Parents are also adamant that accelerated math and science be retained. The wisdom of the faculty is that better learning for all would take place in a mixed ability setting using cooperative learning strategies. They are working on a plan to implement this despite the state and parental opposition.

As the instruction has moved more and more to interdisciplinary teams, some teachers have been resistant, and winning them over has been a gradual process. Staff training and development are thus critical in this enterprise. The faculty has a half-day each month for professional development. Topics for professional development have included school structure, cooperative learning, heterogeneous grouping, and mainstreaming.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
San Diego County Office of Education
6401 Lind Vista Road
San Diego, California 92111-7399
619-292-3572

Contact Person: Mary Catherine Swanson
Level of Education: Middle School and High School

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a regularly scheduled middle school through senior high school elective class that prepares underachieving ethnic minority and economically disadvantaged students with academic potential for college. AVID also restructures the teaching methodology of the entire school to make college preparatory curricula accessible to any student. The program, sponsored by the San Diego County of Education, has been in operation for over 10 years, and has recently expanded to all schools in the system. AVID is being implemented in over 200 schools including some in Kentucky, Minnesota, and U.S. Military schools in Germany.

The AVID academic program is based on "writing as a tool of learning," collaborative study groups, and the inquiry method. The three main components of the program are academic instruction, tutorial support, and motivational activities. Upon entering AVID, students

enroll each year in a regularly scheduled elective class as well as in the advanced college preparatory classes that fulfill the requirements for entry into the University of California and California State University systems.

Tutors (ideally former AVID students) from area colleges and universities are trained to use specific teaching methods and materials to work with the high school students. The college tutors, along with exemplary high school peer tutors, work with AVID students both individually and in study groups, assisting them in all academic areas to make progress commensurate with college expectations.

Each school implementing AVID has a coordinator/teacher that organizes the curriculum and activities, coordinates with tutors, faculty, parents, and students, and is committed to serving the needs of the students. The degree of success of AVID rests largely with the commitment and skill of the coordinator/teacher. Intensive faculty and staff development precedes AVID implementation.

Parents are an integral part of the AVID program. Not only do they encourage their children to achieve academically, they participate in an advisory board and in quarterly meetings. They also maintain regular phone contact with the coordinator.

The area colleges support AVID by providing class speakers, teaching mini-courses, including AVID students in college activities, and tracking the progress of AVID students during their college careers. The community and businesses support AVID by providing speakers and summer apprenticeships for AVID students.

Well-developed AVID programs have resulted in improved standardized test scores campus-wide, increased advanced level course enrollment, and an increased number of students attending college. Over 90% of the students who have enrolled in AVID have graduated from high school and pursued higher education at four year colleges and universities.

AVID has its longest history at Clairemont High School where it has been in place for about 10 years. About 150 students are in enrolled in college prep courses that otherwise would not be in these classes. AVID has graduated 238 students in 10 years, 225 of whom went on to college - 89% to four-year institutions, 11% to two-year institutions. Test scores have also significantly improved.

Burnett Academy
850 N. 2nd Street
San Jose, California 95112
408-998-6267

Contact Person: Mike O'Kane, Principal
Level of Education: Middle School (6-8)
Total Student Enrollment: 890
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
2% African American
<1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
4% Asian/Asian American
54% Latino
39% White
<1% Other
Size of Faculty: 43 Teachers, 1 principal, 2 assistant. principals, 3 guidance counselors

In the fall of 1990, Burnett Academy, in partnership with the "Accelerated Schools Project" at Stanford University, began transforming itself into the nation's first Accelerated Middle School, with the goal of bringing all children into the competitive educational mainstream. The decision to enter this program followed the implementation of court-ordered desegregation. With that change, the faculty noted that many children were coming to Burnett with deficits and, rather than improving, were falling further behind. Teacher consensus was that more reading was needed and so they doubled the requirements for both reading and writing. The social sciences requirement went from one semester to a full year. During the efforts to make the educational process work for all the children at Burnett, the affiliation with the "Accelerated Schools Project" began.

The entire school is focusing its energies on doing for all children what had been reserved for "gifted" and "talented" students. The Accelerated Schools philosophy contains three principles: unity of purpose, empowerment coupled with responsibility, and building on the strengths of students, parents, staff, and the community. The concept that drives the program is that at-risk children should be encouraged to learn at a faster pace to catch up with their peers; that is, "Don't remediate—accelerate!" Burnett's school motto is "All students can learn. All students can succeed."

All children have strengths which can be found in their interests, culture and experiences. By building on their strengths, this program treats all children as if they are gifted. Cooperative learning is used in many situations. Active learning experiences are provided through independent projects, problem solving, and work with manipulatives. By applying academic concepts and skills to real-life problems and events, students see the usefulness of what they are learning. Accelerated Schools use a heavily language-based approach across all subjects, including math.

In addition, Burnett has implemented a Pre-International Baccalaureate program, Project Access (designed to provide opportunities for students who traditionally would not consider college as a future option), Project Equity (developed by the College Board in partnership with business to provide greater and equitable access to educational and career opportunities for underrepre-

sented groups), and Success Team School (encompassing a wide variety of programs, strategies and activities to meet the needs of Burnett's diverse, changing population, such as student study teams, on-site parent training groups, and a peer counselor program).

One of the most notable and important changes at Burnett since the school began the process of acceleration is the participation of the whole school community in making decisions that will lead to the development of a common vision and a shared sense of mission. The Accelerated Schools process gave the school a way of communicating. Teachers reported feeling more professional and excited about improving their teaching and working with other teachers, classified staff felt more like equal partners in the school's transformation, and students had more confidence that the staff really cared about them. The number of students on the honor roll increased and the achievement of Chapter I students far exceeded the district average.

Site-based management and consensus style communication strategies were major changes for the faculty. Many meetings and extensive efforts were involved in implementing these changes, but as a result, individual faculty members developed a sense of ownership in the changes occurring at Burnett. Moreover, there was less teacher resistance to change. Knowing what other teachers were doing in their classrooms helped to build enthusiasm and camaraderie among the faculty. These strategies are integral to the Accelerated Schools Project.

Over time, parents became very supportive, and their involvement has increased. A few parents of honor students were concerned that under the new system, the teachers would be teaching to the middle level. Communication and inclusion has been the key to successful parent involvement.

Mike O'Kane, principal, states that the most difficult problem faced in this process is sustaining the enthusiasm. He says, "Keeping the vision, keeping the theme — that is so important. Sometimes I think my job is cheerleader rather than principal!"

The evaluation component is organized in three parts. Academic achievement is measured through standardized test scores. Teachers are evaluated annually. The steering committee, which consists of teachers, students, parents, and administrators, performs ongoing evaluations of all facets of the school and its programs.

For more information on the Accelerated Schools Program, contact:
Wendy Hopfenberg
Director of the Middle School Project
Accelerated Schools Program
Center for Education Research
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-3084
415-725-1676

Carmen Arace Middle School
390 Park Avenue
Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002
203-242-1946

Contact Person: Luba Pechenuk, Teacher
Level of Education: Middle School (5-8)
Total Student Enrollment: 702
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
83% African American
5% Asian/Asian American
10% White
2% Latino
Size of Faculty: 91 (includes teachers, administrators, guidance counselors)

The predecessor of the newly opened (September 1992) Carmen Arace Middle School was Bloomfield Junior High School. The effort to detrack began in 1986 at Bloomfield. The town and the administration of the school had a series of meetings about the perceived inequity in educational quality received by students at the school. They brought in experts to discuss strategies for offering the same education to all students. The detracking process began as an effort to provide more equitable educational opportunities to all children.

"Student Team Learning" is a cooperative learning program developed in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University. It involves team teaching, interdisciplinary units, and peer coaching at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Workshops for parents and teachers are periodically scheduled to facilitate program operation. Based on the success of "Student Team Learning" at Bloomfield Junior High, the district is currently developing plans to expand implementation of "Student Team Learning" to the secondary and lower middle school grade levels.

Student test scores are increasing, and more children are scoring on grade level. Another outcome, not anticipated, is that by mixing ability levels, discipline is improving. Everyone is concentrating on their work and so the audience for clowning and disruptive behavior is diminished. Fewer and fewer students are isolated in special education classes. They are now mainstreamed and the special education teachers come to them in the regular classrooms.

There was initial resistance to the change to heterogeneous groupings from parents and students. The administration simply stated that this is the way that the school would now be organized and stood by its decision. They offered workshops and training to parents. Some families moved, but most saw the value of detracking. Parents are invited to be a part of the management of the school and are represented on the strategic planning committee.

The current most difficult problem with parents has an economic basis. Many parents are working two and three jobs, making communication difficult. When a problem with a student arises, often it can be corrected immediately with the support of a parent. The problem may persist if the parent remains unaware of it. A task force is working on how to improve lines of communication in such circumstances.

Many teachers were less than enthusiastic about the decision to detrack. A core of about five people began using cooperative learning strategies at Bloomfield. In retrospect, Luba Pechenuk, one of those five, thinks that perhaps this was not the best way to begin. She thinks that this instructional strategy should be coupled with teacher training that focuses on how to handle the untracked classroom. She believes that this would generate a sense of team spirit and effort. Now all seventh and eighth grade teachers are on board with "Student Team Learning," and are training the fifth and sixth grade teachers. Carmen Arace also has teacher coaching teams which involve peer tutoring and observation. Pechenuk also says that follow-up training is very important to keeping the momentum going for teachers.

J. B. Castle High School
45-386 Kaneohe Bay Drive
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744
808-235-4591

Contact Person: Bob Ginlack, Principal; Kathleen O'Malley, Teacher
Level of Education: High School (9-12)
Total Student Enrollment: 1750
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
34% Asian/Asian American
13% White
6% Latino
35% Hawaiian
12% Other

Size of Faculty: 110 teachers; 3 administrators; 6 guidance counselors

The curriculum at J. B. Castle High School had five tracks for many years. In 1989 Castle began detracking. Teachers were used to teaching to homogenous groups of students, and the change to heterogeneous groupings was a major one. Teacher training and workshops on cooperative learning strategies did much to allay teachers' fears of the changes that were occurring and to instill enthusiasm for reform efforts.

Researchers from the University of Hawaii have worked closely with Castle in implementing their School Success Project strategies. The school uses team teaching, heterogeneous grouping, an advisor/advisee system, and parent communication to give students the stability and structure they need to do well. They have created "schools-within-a school" based on a philosophy of nonsegregation. The goal of the "Core Program" for ninth graders is to facilitate the transition into high school and to provide a stable, familiar, and nurturing environment for students, affording them the benefits of a small school while ensuring their access to all the programs of a larger high school. Each of several teams of teachers meets daily to plan and counsel students. Counselors and administrators meet weekly with individual teams to facilitate communication and respond to student problems. The leaders of the teams meet weekly with the principal and vice-principals to coordinate school policies and procedures.

One major outcome of detracking efforts at Castle has been the re-engagement of parents by the teaching teams. There has been a tenfold increase in the number of parent-teacher conferences under this structure, and each team makes approximately thirty calls home each month. This program has also produced other positive outcomes, including improved student attendance and improved academic performance.

Crete-Monee Junior High School
1500 Sangamon Street
Crete, Illinois 60417
708-672-2700

Contact Person: J. T. (Joe) Crawford, Principal
Level of Education: Middle School (7-8)
Total Student Enrollment: 735
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
48% African American
52% White
Size of Faculty: 46 teachers, 5 aides, 2 guidance counselors, 1 assistant principal, 1 principal

Crete-Monee Junior High School is the result of the merger of two highly tracked schools, which had six levels of math, three levels of English, and three levels of reading. Moreover, Chapter I and special education were pull out programs. The merger in 1987 was the impetus for beginning the implementation of alternatives to these groupings of students. The "Effective Schools Strategies" were being used with some of the less advanced students and test scores were beginning to improve. Teachers had an intuitive sense that similar strategies should work well for all students. It was thus faculty initiative that brought ability grouping into question, and it is largely through faculty tenacity that Crete-Monee has met with such success.

Crete-Monee has ended tracking and reduced groups through a shared decision making process. They have an immersion model for special education and Chapter I. All classes are heterogeneously grouped. Team teaching using interdisciplinary themes has also worked very well at Crete-Monee. Cooperative learning strategies have been successful as well.

To enhance intercultural relations, Crete-Monee implemented a program called "Building a Community of Friends," in which daily time is taken to teach students how to get along with one another. The school motto is "Different is not deficient." A thirty-hour public service requirement for each student is a part of this effort.

The belief at Crete-Monee that multi-cultural education is the key to success is dramatized in their approach to Black History Month. The goals for the program are (1) to instill in students a better understanding of discrimination, to develop an awareness of personal biases, and to work together to develop a project; and (2) to give students a better understanding of the Civil Rights struggles. The final day of the month is a school-wide celebration of each person's own ethnicity.

Test data from Crete-Monee has been quite positive over the years. Despite a recent dip in scores on one of the basic skills tests, the faculty at Crete-Monee has recommitted itself to its core mission: to improve student performance. They are reassessing their programs and strategies, but remain committed to heterogeneous classroom instruction.

Parental involvement has evolved into support over the years. As might be expected, the parents of students in honors and high level classes were the most opposed to detracking. Slowly they have come to see the positive results for all the school's children — including their own. Joe Crawford believes that the trust level parents had for the school, the faculty and the administration was very helpful in making the transition a smooth one. He points to the monthly Teen Night as a successful project of the PTO.

In reflecting on the process of detracking that has been evolving over the last five years, Joe Crawford says, "Take your time. Take it slow. Do it right." He says that teacher training is *critical*—so critical, in fact, that he thinks a school should not implement alternatives if training cannot be provided. He cites insecurity and fear on the part of the faculty (himself included) as the major barrier to eliminating tracking. With appropriate training, however, changes in grouping practices have been effectively implemented. The shared decision making process used by the faculty also had increased each person's investment.

The main element in overcoming barriers is that those proposing these changes must be committed and remain steadfast in their decision to detrack. That includes being vocal and persuasive at school board and PTO meetings. It also includes harnessing community support by keeping citizens aware of the school's activities.

Eakin Elementary School
2400 Fairfax Avenue
Nashville, TN 37212
615-298-8076

Contact Person: Bob Dorris, Principal; Pam Burish, Teacher
Level of Education: Elementary (K-6)
Total Student Enrollment: 750
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
24% African American
14% Asian/Asian American
4% Latino
57% White
Size of Faculty: 50 faculty, staff, administrators

Known for its racial and ethnic diversity, Eakin Elementary School has long valued this characteristic and worked to make quality educational opportunities accessible to all its students. International students comprise about thirty percent of enrollment with 32 nationalities represented and 25 different languages spoken.

Eakin is participating in a pilot project involving the implementation of Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) in conjunction with researchers at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. CBM emphasizes classroom-wide peer tutoring designed to enhance the individualization of instruction for all students. Two third grade classes are currently using CBM strategies in mathematics, and Eakin is developing plans to expand the use of CBM to the entire third grade.

In 1991, Eakin was one of five schools in the United States to receive a grant from *Readers' Digest* to implement a comprehensive program that uses the arts as part of integral classroom instruction. Integrated themes, hands-on experience, live performance attendance, and instruction from community artists are part of the Eakin School Project. Because of their culturally transcendent appeal, the arts provide a natural meeting ground for interracial and interethnic interaction among students.

Since Eakin has made a concerted effort to seize the opportunities that its diversity provides, there is a great degree of interest in the school within the community. Many members of the arts community regularly volunteer time with the students. A local museum has loaned an art exhibit to the school to give it a "museum-like" look, thus contributing to its international feel. Principal Bob Dorris calls his approach a "total community concept."

Dorris' perspective on implementing change is that there must be someone who is willing to set an example.

He emphasizes the importance of promoting a climate of risk-taking that involves the types of risks that are congruent with life-long learning. School announcements, for example, are made by students in both English and a foreign language of the week, and Dorris himself extends to his students a typical greeting used by speakers of the language. He says that often his attempts are clumsy, but he notes that his efforts are appreciated by the students who speak that language and are noticed by other students as they attempt to use the greetings themselves. Eakin's school community capitalizes fully on the many strengths that its broad diversity has to offer.

La Escuela Fratney
3255 N. Fratney Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212
414-264-4840
Contact Person: Rita Tenorio
Level of Education: K - 5
Total Student Enrollment: 350
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
26% African American
1% Asian/Asian American
60% Latino
13% White
Size of Faculty: 45 (includes staff and specialty teachers)

La Escuela Fratney (Fratney Elementary School) was "re-founded" in 1988 as a model of multicultural, community-based, democratic education. A decision by the school district to close Fratney and send the students to another school prompted a group of parents and teachers to organize a campaign to establish Fratney as a school for children who live in an integrated neighborhood. Fratney was innovative in that it sought to teach students to be bilingual in Spanish and English using cooperative instructional methods in heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

Fratney features a two-way bilingual program that treats the backgrounds of both Spanish- and English-speaking students as strengths and resources to be developed and shared. Approximately 30% of the children are Spanish-language dominant and the entire faculty is bilingual. A multicultural curriculum that draws on the diverse school community has been adopted. The school uses a whole-language approach that teaches children through reading, writing, and listening for a purpose. This approach allows students to learn that language is for communication and accomplishment. All children are taught in a cooperative learning environment in which subjects are viewed as interconnected, and the curriculum is organized around school-wide themes. La Escuela Fratney uses democratic discipline strategies and school-based management principles.

Fratney also uses school-wide thematic curriculum. After evaluating that process, it was decided that spending more time on fewer themes might be preferable, so the number of school-wide themes was reduced from seven to four per year. This arrangement has been much more comfortable and has given the faculty and students an opportunity to focus on the four areas in greater depth.

In retrospect, the staff wonders if attempting to implement all aspects of such a comprehensive program simultaneously might have been too ambitious. Through the hard work and determination of the parents and staff, however, many of the innovative alternatives are now in place and working well.

Evaluation and continual improvement are built into the program at La Escuela Fratney. Parents, staff and students participate in the process. Evaluation is seen by all as an important element contributing to the overall success of this unique elementary school.

Montgomery Knolls Elementary School
807 Daleview Drive
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901
301-431-7667

Contact Person: Pamela Prue, Principal
Level of Education: Elementary (Pre-K - 2)
Total Student Enrollment: 450
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
39% African American
12% Asian/Asian American
18% Latino
31% White
Size of Faculty: 18 classroom teachers; 1 principal; 13 school-based specialists

A Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented grant from the U.S. Department of Education enabled Montgomery Knolls Elementary School to begin the "Early Childhood Gifted Model Program" in 1990. The goal of this program is to uncover the strengths and talents of traditionally underserved gifted youngsters. Economic disadvantage, limited English proficiency, or developmental differences may mask these children's strengths. The program represents a composite of the newest thinking of early childhood educators and psychologists about ways to tap each child's potential.

One aspect of the program is based on Howard Gardner's Model of Multiple Intelligences from Project Zero at Harvard University. This model proposes that intelligence is varied, dynamic, and developmental. Strategies employed include active problem solving, abstract thinking, integrated broad based themes, and a dynamic assessment approach to teaching.

Initially, teachers were concerned about change and

the extra time and effort that they would have to expend to implement the program. There was a difficult adjustment period while learning how to work together in a new way. They succeeded by constantly evaluating where they were and where they were going. They used a "think tank" concept at the very beginning, with small groups of teachers focusing on selected subjects. This was critical to making each individual feel like a contributor and to creating a sense of ownership in the project. Now, over two-thirds of the faculty and staff describe ways in which training has helped their instruction. Their skills in observing and describing student behavior have increased. The teachers are using a broad range of means to assess students' understanding of material. Sometimes the students are given the opportunity to choose how they want to demonstrate mastery of the material. Principal Pamela Prue says, "This is the most stimulating professional experience I've ever had."

Funding for the Jacob Javits grant ended on December 31, 1992, with the evaluation to be completed by March 1993; however, the goals and philosophy of the program have been institutionalized at Montgomery Knolls and will continue to flower there. Another Javits grant has been awarded to the feeder school (grades 3-6) of Montgomery Knolls. As children leave Montgomery Knolls for the next level of education, they will enter a program that builds on their previous experience.

Parkway South High School
801 Hanna Road
Manchester, Missouri 63021
314-394-8338

Contact Person: Craig Larson, Principal; Sarah Skidmore, Teacher
Level of Education: High School (9 - 12)
Total Student Enrollment: 1925
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
19% African American
<1% Asian / Asian American
<1% Latino
81% White
Size of Faculty: 150 teachers, 1 principal, 4 assistant principals

Parkway South High School, in Manchester, Missouri, is one of four high schools in the Parkway School District (23,000 students) and has been an active member of the Coalition of Essential Schools since 1986. Parents in the Parkway district have high expectations for their children and the schools. Manchester is located twenty miles west of St. Louis. Twenty-two percent of Parkway students are bused from the St. Louis city school district through a voluntary interdistrict transfer plan that involves a number of school districts in the metropolitan area. Parkway South High's 370 voluntary transfer students add a great deal to the diversity of the student population. During the past three years over 90% of South graduates have continued their education after graduation. Most of these go to four year colleges and universities.

Though never rigidly tracked, the school has made a conscious effort since 1986 to eliminate basic classes and allow flexibility in class assignment. The faculty had been especially concerned about the negative effects of placing students in a "basic" class. Teachers were concerned that students who were never exposed to a rich curriculum would never catch up. Basic English classes have been eliminated and replaced by a tutorial program. In addition, honors sections in 9th and 10th grade social studies have been blended into regular classes; however, students may contract with the teacher to earn a weighted honors grade.

The English tutorial is now in use the high schools throughout the Parkway School District. It has been successful and popular with students, teachers and parents. Most students have experienced excellent skill growth and have improved their English grades by participating in the program. Most honors students support the program and many report they like it because it makes enrollment in honors more flexible. The blended social studies classes are less popular, however. Moreover, a vocal minority of parents and students strongly prefer separate honors classes and are pressuring the district to provide them.

If Parkway South began the detracking process again, administrators say that they be more attentive to communication with parents. The parents and students would be briefed extensively about the concept and rationale for change.

The school uses an outcomes-based system of measuring student success. Measuring the success of tutorials and blended classes involves informal surveying of students, parents, and staff. Graduation rates and after school plans of graduates are also being monitored.

Walbrook Senior High School
2000 Edgewood
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
410-396-0721

Contact Person: Dr. Samuel Billups, Principal
Level of Education: High School (9-12)
Total Student Enrollment: 1300
Racial Breakdown of Student Population:
99.9% African American
<1% White
<1% Latino
Size of Faculty: 115 teachers, 1 principal, 3 assistant principals

The Essential School Program at Walbrook High School was implemented in 1986. The focus of the program is to (1) strengthen reasoning, critical, and creative thinking skills, (2)perfect articulation, collaboration, computation, and recitation skills, and (3) provide opportunities for emotional, cultural, social, and educational growth. Walbrook's commitment is to teach students how to learn. Their goal is to produce academically successful, socially acceptable, productive citizens by promoting the development of the whole child and enhancing self-esteem.

Walbrook subscribes to the philosophy of Fred Newman, who argues that authentic performances should produce, rather than reproduce, knowledge. When a ninth grader begins the program, he or she has four years in which to demonstrate mastery of the skills required for graduation, using performance activities that include portfolios, essential questions, authentic performances, and exhibitions.

The progress of Walbrook students and staff since 1986 has been impressive. Some of the measures used to gauge the success of the program are the Maryland competency requirements, promotion attendance, drop-out rate, participation in activities, and service in leadership roles. In every case, the results have exceeded the stated goals. The first group of seniors graduated in 1990, and 100% of the graduates completed the exhibition.

CHAPTER FIVE

Lessons From Efforts to Detrack Schools

As the descriptions of detracking efforts in Chapter Four illustrate, schools that have begun this process usually find that, to be successful, they must make changes in a myriad of school practices. That is because tracking is just one of many problematic school structures and practices. Tracking supports and is supported by other things that are wrong with schools—diluted, skills-based curricula; passive, teacher-dominated instructional strategies; and standardized, paper-and-pencil assessment, to name just a few. As a consequence, detracking requires far more than the development of new grouping and scheduling strategies. Simply mixing students into heterogeneous classrooms cannot begin to provide diverse groups of students with the opportunities and supportive environment they need to learn well. Neither can a *single* new technique pave the way. Training teachers in cooperative learning methods, for example, is typical of detracking efforts. As helpful as this teaching method is, teachers still confront disconnected subject areas, fragmented curricula, norm-referenced assessments, inadequate support for special needs, isolation from their colleagues, and so on. Since these practices frustrate efforts to develop high quality heterogeneous classes, detracking will not work unless these other practices are also reconsidered and made compatible with the new grouping structure. An outcome, now largely unanticipated, is that such changes should improve the quality of schooling for all children—even those now receiving the "best."

The array of detracking practices invented and adapted by some schools provide enormously helpful illustrations for other schools (see Wheelock, 1992). Nevertheless, the schools themselves should not be considered "models" to be copied, but, rather, as purveyors of more general lessons. The most important lesson they teach is that creating a *culture of detracking* is more important than any particular organizational arrangements, curricula, or instructional strategies a school attempts—as necessary as these are. More important, school personnel who are grappling with detracking emphasize that they need to move beyond an exclusively "practical" focus on school programs and classroom strategies, and attend to values and beliefs—a process that begins to restructure their thinking, as well as their practices, and allows them to build political support for school cultures in which tracking no longer makes sense.

A second lesson from these schools, then, is that while new technologies are necessary, they are clearly insufficient to bring forth change. Alternative practices must make sense to educators and their communities before they can be fully implemented and sustained in schools. Such sense making occurs when the values and beliefs on which tracking rests are challenged and replaced with new norms that support heterogeneous grouping and the other school and classroom practices that it requires.

Challenging norms is essential since the underlying assumptions of any practice provide the intellectual infrastructure that protects it from change. The norms that support tracking are conventional, if increasingly obsolete, conceptions of intelligence, as well as deep-seated racist and classist attitudes and prejudices. These norms—consciously and unconsciously—drive the day-to-day educational practices mentioned above. Tracking also conforms to the deeply ingrained bureaucratic notion that any process can be made more efficient when it is divided into hierarchical levels and specialized categories. Another norm that bolsters and legitimizes tracking is the American emphasis on competition and individualism over cooperation and the good of the community—a norm that suggests that "good" education is a scarce commodity available only to a few winners. Although the American system of public education was designed to promote the common good and to prepare children for participation in a democratic society, more recent emphasis has been placed on what a graduate can "get out" of schooling in terms of income, power, or status.

Obviously, efforts to detrack schools must reach beyond the technical, day-to-day functions of the school and grapple with the way in which our society views such matters as human capacities; individual and group differences; fairness, efficiency, and competition; and the goals of public education.

A third lesson drawn from these schools is that

reformers must address pressures from the social-political environment that hold tracking in place. Political concerns grow out of the norms that undergird tracking and, at the same time, have a strong influence on technical decisions at the school and district levels. The pressure placed on educators by savvy parents who want their children enrolled in the "best" classes is no doubt the most obvious such political factor. Parents of high-track students are clearly advantaged—both in educational opportunities and status—by the current arrangement. In a competitive system that only offers a small percentage of students slots in the high track classes, these parents have few options but to push to have the best for their children.

Administrators rightfully worry that attempts to do away with tracking will lead to a loss of support from these involved parents and a lower enrollment of children from the most advantaged families. This latter concern has been fueled by advocates for high achieving students and those who have qualified for state and local programs for gifted and talented students. They perceive the research on tracking and the response it has engendered as a serious threat to high quality education for their constituents. They fear that detracking will sap the opportunities now available to high achievers. Because all schools need political support—not only for funding and physical resources, but also for credibility—a policy that allows some tracking (for example, maintenance of separate gifted and talented student programs) within schools is often exchanged for the political credit that more advantaged and involved parents bring to a school.

The pressure from more affluent and better educated parents to keep tracked schools and to have their children placed and kept in the highest level courses certainly reflects a competitive, individualistic attitude toward the purpose of schooling, but in racially mixed schools it can take on another dimension. Because race, class, assessed ability, and track placements interrelate, heterogeneous ability grouping may mean racial integration in classes where none existed before. Fear that minority student enrollment leads to lower educational standards, white and wealthy parents often lobby for their children's enrollment in more racially and socio-economically homogenous gifted and talented programs, or for honors courses within desegregated schools. Most truly believe that their children will receive a better education in a homogeneous high-track classroom. Given what we know about teacher expectations for students in different tracks and the resulting level of difficulty of the work teachers assign to students in those tracks, these parents are correct to the extent we place no value on learning that occurs in interracial interactions.

Successful detracking, then, will depend on using political strategies that build supportive communities both within and outside the school. This political dimension asks "How might competing interests such as advocates for the gifted, for disadvantaged, and for minorities—redefine their roles and create a collective advocacy for all children?" Building such new communities requires the political leadership of educators. This leadership is most likely to emerge from reasoned and critical inquiry, based on research, self-study, and democratic values. Moreover, it must be built on new norms—on new confidence in the intellectual capacities of all children and new confidence in the capacities of schools to provide for all a far richer and meaningful education than that is now reserved only for those in the top tracks.

Schools currently undergoing detracking provide us with both inspiration and sobering insight. It is likely that none of these schools have resolved all of their tracking problems; many are still vulnerable to social and political forces grounded in old norms regarding race, class, ability, and competition for the "best" education. What matters here is that these schools bear witness to the most essential lesson about altering schools in ways that serve all children well. That lesson is that at the same time schools entertain new techniques, they must also recognize and be willing to confront the fact that tracking is simply a structural manifestation of norms deeply rooted in the culture of schooling and the political forces driven by these norms.

CHAPTER SIX

What Next? How to Promote Alternatives to Ability Grouping

There is no longer any doubt: Ability grouping is harmful to children. Ability grouping hurts individual children by denying them opportunities for the rich, meaningful learning that contributes to improved chances for social and economic security later in life. Ability grouping also hurts communities and the larger society by segregating those labeled "more able" from those labeled "less able," institutionalizing divisions between the "have's" and "have-nots," and perpetuating the false assumption that a limited number of children can achieve at high levels. It is no secret that these harmful consequences of ability grouping fall most heavily on African American, Latino, immigrant, and poor children.

Increasing numbers of parents, citizens, and educators are recognizing the problems of ability grouping. Like them, you may be:

- A parent concerned about ability grouping in your community's schools—but worried that your child, who receives the best marks in the class, will miss out on the special opportunities she now has, or that your shy and uncertain child will be overwhelmed outside of his specialized setting.
- A teacher uncomfortable with the job of sorting children into "high," "middle," and "low" groups and making recommendations for the few students who will go on to the high school "honors" classes—but worried that you and your colleagues are unprepared for classes any more diverse than they are already.
- A principal or superintendent concerned about your school or district using ability grouping practices that reflect existing racial and socioeconomic cleavages in your community—but uncertain how to convince teachers, school board members, and parents to abandon entrenched sorting and grouping practices in favor of workable alternatives that ensure that *all* students have equal access to the educational opportunities provided by the school or district.
- A legislator, school board member, or average taxpayer inclined to think that your community's schools could do a lot better with a lot more children—but undecided about whether the necessary changes are affordable given the scarce resources and tax-scrimping mindset of the times.

Given these dilemmas, what can be done? Can we eliminate ability grouping to bring about both excellence and equity?

Knowledge, Beliefs, Techniques

With new knowledge and tools at their disposal, more and more educators at all levels are now exploring alternatives to ability grouping in order to improve schooling for all students. They are struggling to come up with new ways in which their school structures and routines can include rather than exclude students to provide more meaningful learning for *all* in heterogeneous classrooms rather than for a few in segregated settings. Their experiences—both successes as well as mistakes—suggest that bringing about positive results requires developing and using knowledge about how ability grouping affects schools, exploring the beliefs that support ability grouping, and identifying the educational tools and techniques that make alternative practice possible. Finally, the art of implementing alternatives to ability grouping involves weaving these elements of knowledge, beliefs, and techniques together in a way that is politically acceptable—a process as varied as each community and school.

What guidelines do these experiences of implementing alternatives to ability grouping in schools offer?

Knowledge and Information

Successful implementation of alternatives to ability grouping takes thought, research, and investigation so that everyone begins with a common understanding of the effects of current school practices and the changes that are possible. We suggest the following steps to acquiring the necessary knowledge and information:

■ *1. Learn what research says about ability grouping and investigate alternatives endorsed by professional and citizens groups.*

Begin with a good research summary such as "Curriculum Differentiation: Opportunities, Outcomes and Meanings," by Jeannie Oakes, Adam Gamoran and Reba

Page (in the *1992 Handbook of Research on Curriculum*), which describes how ability grouping results in a system that offers different educational experiences to different groups of students and influences student achievement, self-esteem, expectations, and aspirations. Then read the overview of innovative school practices found in *Making the Best of Schools: A Handbook for Parents, Teachers, and Policymakers* by Jeannie Oakes and Martin Lipton (1990). Descriptions of effective practices for heterogeneous classrooms may also be found in such journals as *Educational Leadership* or *Cooperative Learning*. You will learn that most experts agree that ability grouping has proved harmful for the most vulnerable children, has contributed to within-school segregation, has lowered expectations for most students, and has denied access to higher levels of learning to many. You will also learn that new instructional practices and ways of organizing curriculum make ability grouping increasingly unnecessary. Many educational leaders and advocates actively oppose ability grouping, including such organizations as the Quality Education for Minorities Project, the National Middle Schools Association, the National Education Association, the National Association of Advocates for Students, the National Coalition of Education Activists, and the Carnegie Endowment for Children.

■ 2. *Learn all you can about the consequences of your school and district policies related to ability grouping practices.*

Identify the number of different levels or track groupings at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Review your school/district policies on how children are placed in specific programs (including special education and gifted and talented programs, honors, general, and basic classes) and how standardized test scores are used for grouping students. Determine by race how many children are retained in each grade. Identify any programs or tracks that are identified by race or ethnic group. Determine the percentage of students by race in particular courses that serve as "gatekeepers" for course sequences that lead to further opportunity, including the percentage of students enrolled in Algebra 1 in eighth and ninth grades. Analyze your school's or your district's graduation rates and opportunities for attending post-secondary education for students in different programs and groups.

■ 3. *Identify any classrooms or schools in your district (or in similar districts) that are successfully implementing alternatives to ability grouping.*

Across the country, knowledgeable educators are using innovative curricula and instruction in heterogeneous classes. These efforts, however, are not always well publicized. You may be able to locate such efforts by calling schools in your district or by talking to parents whose children attend different schools. Visit the schools and classrooms you identify and talk to the principal and teachers to learn more about their motivation and preparation for trying new approaches. Investigate different kinds of approaches to heterogeneous grouping such as two-way bilingual classes, classrooms that integrate children with disabilities with "typical" students, and classrooms that blend students who test at all levels on traditional testing measures. Some of these alternatives are described in *Crossing the Tracks: How "Untracking" Can Save America's Schools* by Anne Wheelock (1992).

■ 4. *Communicate your findings and recommendations for change to others concerned about ability grouping.*

Identify all those who need to learn about the negative effects of ability grouping, including parents (especially parents of students enrolled in Chapter 1 programs, special education programs, or so-called "general" tracks), school administrators, teachers, school board members, and citizens groups. Make plans to convey your findings to all of them. Consider calling meetings of concerned parents and presenting your findings at meetings of organized groups. Some groups of educators, parents, and citizens have formed coalitions with community and citizen organizations and have presented Saturday conferences so that more people can learn about ability grouping and alternatives to it.

Establishing a common base of information is a first step toward change. The challenge remains to *use* that knowledge, and that takes further steps.

Beliefs and Assumptions

Many educators who have studied and worked in schools that practice ability grouping have concluded that the belief system of educators in our schools makes a difference as to whether a school continues to group students by perceived ability or begins to implement some alternatives. Consequently, as Oakes and Lipton (1992) observe, the process of implementing alternatives to ability grouping involves "a critical and unsettling rethinking of fundamental educational norms." They note:

This rethinking asks people to challenge their entrenched views of such matters as human capacities, individual and group differences, the purposes of schooling, and the ever-present tensions between the norms of competitive individualism and the more democratic norms of support and community (p. 449).

Other educators like Silvernail and Capelluti (1991) believe that taking time for teachers to discuss school values and norms regarding these issues, as well as their beliefs about their own responsibility for teaching all students, is a critical step to take *prior* to adopting alternatives.

We suggest a few topics for beginning these discussions:

■ *1. In early and ongoing discussions about what teachers, parents, students, and citizens believe about the nature of human intelligence and learning, consider:*

- How do we define intelligence in theory and practice? Is human intelligence fixed and limited? What conditions are required to extend the capacity of human beings to learn at high levels?
- How important to student achievement is "ability" in comparison to "effort?"
- Do teachers believe that it is their responsibility to ensure that all students learn?
- What support do teachers need to learn new approaches, to teach in nurturing and challenging ways, and to take risks?
- What do we believe all students need to know and to be able to do to ensure a secure future?

■ *2. In early and ongoing discussions about what teachers, parents, students, and citizens believe about the purposes of public education and opportunity in a democracy, consider:*

- What is the purpose of public schools in a democracy?
- Is it the job of teachers to make decisions about which students will benefit from which opportunities?
- Are some students more "deserving" than others of what public education has to offer?
- Is classroom and school diversity—academic, racial, ethnic, economic—considered an asset for learning or an insurmountable hurdle?
- What does learning in settings which include a diversity of learning have to do with achievement in a democracy?
- What learning is important to expand opportunity for future success?
- What do we believe about education as a resource? Can we imagine "enough" for everyone—whatever their background, wherever they live—or are we nagged by the possibility that excellent schooling is a scarce resource to be apportioned first to those we deem most likely to benefit?

These questions are as important as they are complex and difficult. The responses together address the larger question: "Education for what?" The answers that each school develops also shape the structures and routines that are fashioned as an alternative approach to ability grouping. Taking time to think about these questions is a critical part of a broader commitment to professional development that is necessary for successfully implementing alternatives to ability grouping. The answers delineate a context for adopting these alternatives that will lead to more meaningful schooling for all students.

Tools and Techniques

Fortunately in the case of implementing alternatives to ability grouping, where there is a will, there *is* a way! In fact, there are a number of ways. These alternatives are much more than the regrouping of students from homogeneous groups into heterogeneous groups. It is truly whole-school reform, requiring educators to investigate and adapt a variety of new approaches to curriculum and instruction in the classroom. Increasingly such resources are available including, for example, curriculum and instruction that:

- Is developed expressly for heterogeneous groups and is frequently organized around themes or concepts.
- Involves resources geared to engage all facets of human intelligence and requires cooperative learning of diverse students working in small groups.
- Is organized to emphasize thinking skills—comprehension, application of concepts, analysis and classification of information, synthesis, evaluation—as well as basic knowledge in subject areas.
- Is infused with the variety of cultural perspectives found in the real world.
- Is characterized by teachers' interventions that communicate high expectations equally for all students while responding to different needs of different students.
- Builds on the experiences of all students in the classroom and emphasizes students' strengths.
- Engages students in project work that generates products suitable for exhibitions.

Sometimes these approaches are developed by individual teachers. Sometimes schools choose to purchase packaged curricula that meet these standards. Whatever the approach, implementation is almost always easier when it is executed by teams of teachers within a school with their involvement and adaptation. Implementing alternatives to ability grouping is not something a teacher can do alone. What is most crucial to implementation is a commitment to professional development for all teachers.

Thinking and Acting Politically

Implementing alternatives to ability grouping is a complicated process, in part because it involves changing so many aspects of school life, but also because it must engage different constituencies with different interests. Schools do not operate apart from a broader political context. Like other organizations, schools are subject to a variety of formal and informal laws, regulations, and organizational arrangements that often reflect a long history of compromises and accommodations to different interest groups. Constituencies representing children labeled "gifted and talented" or "educationally exceptional" exist in every community. Likewise, for some school personnel, their mission and identity are based on structures that identify these children and educate them in exclusive settings.

Successful school reform depends on demonstrating to these constituencies that their children will not be harmed and will benefit from alternatives to ability grouping. The idea is not to dilute the curriculum but to make the types of learning opportunities presently available to high achieving youngsters accessible to all. In many communities, implementing alternatives to ability grouping does result in the withdrawal of some parents from the school or district. But many of these schools have enhanced their credibility and kept disruption to a minimum by paying attention to a few basic do's and don'ts, or bewares. Some lessons from the experience of these schools are:

- DO become familiar with common arguments in favor of ability grouping and have responses prepared. BEWARE of the inclination to think that everyone will automatically be convinced that change is desirable and necessary just because research and "right" are on your side.
- DO make a plan for detracking that involves teachers. BEWARE of a plan made "from above," announced in June for implementation in September, and omitting any time or resources for professional development.
- DO consult with and inform all parents early in the planning stages, identify parent support, and be prepared for tough questions from opponents. BEWARE that rumors not backed up by information circulate fast.
- DO introduce changes in grouping, curriculum, and instruction in phases, allowing for feedback to the whole school and opportunities for modification. BEWARE of implementation that assumes school reform will take place all in one year.
- DO begin by peeling off the lowest tracks from the ability grouping hierarchy. BEWARE of plans that eliminate the top track or that move from three levels to two levels by dividing the middle level into high and low groups.
- DO begin with the most enthusiastic teachers who are sold on the idea. BEWARE that teachers commandeered into teaching heterogeneous classes can undermine success through in-class labeling, differential treatment of students within the classroom, or failure to accommodate individual differences in curriculum and instruction.
- DO consider ways to encourage risk-taking among teachers and to make it safe to try new approaches. BEWARE of policies or practices that make classroom innovation a high-stakes game for teachers.
- DO continue to circulate information about alternatives to ability grouping, publicize your successes throughout your implementation effort, and enlist your students in describing their experiences to parents and teachers. BEWARE that some teachers and parents may harbor residual skepticism or hostility until the benefits of the alternatives are demonstrated conclusively.

All these steps require stability and clear leadership in each school to sustain momentum for change, to articulate in the community the goals of the alternatives to ability grouping and to protect risk-taking teachers in each school from opposition to change.

Guidelines for the Development of Academically and Racially Heterogeneous Schooling

In summary, the experiences of implementing alternatives to ability grouping in schools suggest that finding positive answers to a number of key questions can boost chances for success. These answers will make schools places that guarantee that all students will have access to knowledge and opportunity for success. As you consider beginning the process of school change, keep these questions in mind:

- Has everyone in your school community—administrators, teachers, school board members, and parents—taken time to discuss the values and assumptions behind grouping practices, to investigate the impact these assumptions have on students, and to consider alternative ways of thinking about students' capacities for learning? Does everyone understand that the alternatives involve more than the changing of grouping practices, including changes in classroom curriculum and instruction and school routines?
- Does your school have a schoolwide plan for grouping, curricular, and instructional reforms and the commitment to review the plan on a regular basis to assess progress and make changes? Do policymakers understand that school reform is a multi-year process, and are they willing to make a commitment to the resources and an accountability process that accounts for at least a five-year process?
- Is everyone in the school prepared to communicate high expectations for success to all students? Are the expectations formerly reserved for students assigned to "top group" classes extended to all students?
- Will the interesting content, pace, and rigor of the "top group" curriculum be implemented in heterogeneous classes without watering it down?
- Will teachers be participating in on-going professional development in preparation for using instructional methods that make high-level learning accessible to all?
- Will new approaches emphasize student-student and teacher-student collaboration and allow the intensity of learning to vary with the interests of students while challenging all to maximize their effort?
- Will your school back up the commitment to high expectations with concrete resources and opportunities so that low achieving students receive assistance that is directly tied to success in the high-expectations curriculum?

- Will your school make the changes necessary to keep students from falling behind, especially in subjects in which building blocks of learning are sequential?
- Will the school offer additional help through "double-dose" scheduling, after-school or before-school tutoring, or "pre-teaching"?

- Will your school maximize opportunities for positive interracial and interethnic contact among students in all aspects of school life, both academic and extracurricular?
- Has your school taken steps to eliminate labeling in school communications and routines?

The elimination of ability grouping practices that deny children equal access to a rich, meaningful education is not easy, but it is a goal worth pursuing. The combination of a group of informed educators, parents, policymakers, and citizens acting together for the benefit of all children, broad discussion of the purposes of education in a democracy, professional development to support teachers prepared to implement new approaches to curriculum and instruction, and wise, politically-savvy leadership pulling together the necessary knowledge and tools is a formula that makes implementing alternatives to ability grouping not only desirable, but possible.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion: Why Ability Grouping Must End

The verdict is clear. Ability grouping is ineffective. It is harmful to many students. It inhibits development of interracial respect, understanding, and friendship. It undermines democratic values and contributes to a stratified society. There *are* effective and practical alternatives. Ability grouping and tracking must end.

Moreover, academic tracking is an anachronism. There may have been a time when curriculum tracking in schools actually coincided with the needs of the society and the economy. That is, a designated number of academically proficient students were needed to pursue further education and careers that depended upon that education, while a number of non-academically oriented students were needed to enter the work force directly and perform the important and occasionally well-paying jobs that required less education. That situation has changed dramatically. If the U.S. is to maintain its standard of living, it must develop a work force capable of thinking, learning, and making decisions.

Writing off a substantial proportion of our students never made sense from a social standpoint and is rapidly becoming suicidal from an economic standpoint. Yet curriculum tracking still exists and is widely practiced in most U.S. schools today. The effects of curriculum tracking and ability grouping on student learning opportunities are especially negative for students of color who are overrepresented among the low groups. African American and Latino students constitute our largest—and fastest growing—student populations, and the future well-being of the country depends upon their access to a high quality education. Corporate leaders and educators have recently focused increased attention on the level and type of skills American youth bring to the work force and on the content and quality of their high school courses and programs of study. According to a recent U.S. Department of Education report (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1990), for example, high school seniors with higher reading proficiency scores reported being in the "academic track" and taking more rigorous course work. The strong effect of tracking on adults' cognitive skill levels makes it clear that if schools are to meet the requirements of our economy for a more highly skilled future work force, public schools must provide more equitable access to learning opportunities which develop reasoning, inference, and critical thinking skills.

Accomplishing this important shift in educational policy will require major school restructuring efforts that encourage alternatives to tracking and ability grouping. The nation's changing demographics have resulted in a similar imperative with regard to issues of social cohesion in an increasingly pluralistic society. As the American population becomes ever more racially and culturally diverse, issues of intergroup tolerance and understanding take on greater significance for our national well-being. In this vein, corporate leaders' concerns with the type of graduates produced by our public schools is not limited to cognitive and technical skills, but also includes social skills and *especially* the ability to relate to persons of different backgrounds and to be good team players. Thus, the adverse effects of tracking on students' cognitive and social skills and on affective outcomes related to racial intolerance suggest the need for change. As a society we cannot tolerate low skills in a major portion of our work force and expect to thrive; moreover, we cannot tolerate racial and ethnic intolerance and expect to survive.

References

Alexander, K.L., Cook, M.A., & McDill, E.L. (1978). Curriculum tracking and educational stratification. *American Sociological Review, 43*, 47-66.

Allport, G. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Barr, R., & Dreeben, R. (1983). *How schools work*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press

Braddock, J. H. (1989). *Tracking of Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and White Students: National patterns and trends*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students

Braddock, J.H., & Slavin, R.E. (1992). *Life in the slow lane: A longitudinal study of effects of ability grouping on student achievement, attitudes, and perceptions*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students

Brophy, J.E., & Good, T.L. (1986). Teacher behavior and student achievement. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd Ed.) (pp. 328-375). New York: Macmillan

Brown, J.S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Researcher, 18*, 32-42

Cohen, E.G. (1975). The effects of desegregation on race relations. *Law and Contemporary Problems, 39* (2), 271-299

Cohen, E.G. (1986). *Designing groupwork: Strategies for the heterogeneous classroom*. New York: Teacher's College Press

Cottle, T.L. (1974). What tracking did to Ollie Taylor. *Social Policy, 5*, 21-24

Devin-Sheehan, L., Feldman, R., & Allen, V. (1976) Research on children tutoring children: A critical review. *Review of Educational Research, 46* (3), 355-385

Ellwein, M. C. & Eads, G. M. (1990, April). *How well do readiness tests predict future school performance?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, MA

Epstein, J. (1985). After the bus arrives: Desegregation in desegregated schools. *Journal of Social Issues, 41* (3):23-43

Esposito, D. (1973). Homogeneous and heterogeneous ability grouping: Principal findings and implications for evaluating and designing more effective educational environments. *Review of Educational Research, 43*, 163-179

Fox, L.H. (1979). Programs for the gifted and talented: An overview. In A.H. Passon (Ed.), *The gifted and talented: Their education and development* (pp. 104-126). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L.S., Baher, M.W., Fernstrom, P., & Stecker, P.M. (1990). Mainstream assistance teams: A scientific basis for the art of consultation. *Exceptional Children, 56*, 493-513

Fuligni, A.J., Eccles, J.S., & Barber, B.L. (1990, April). *The long-term effects of seventh-grade ability grouping in mathematics*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, MA

Gamoran, A. (1986). Instructional and Institutional effects of ability grouping. *Sociology of Education, 59*, 185-198

Haller, E.J. (1985). Pupil race and elementary school ability grouping: Are teachers biased against Black children? *American Educational Research Journal, 22*, 465-483

Heyns, B. (1974). Social selection and stratification within schools. *American Journal of Sociology, 79*, 1434-1451

Hiebert, E.H. (1983). An examination of ability grouping for reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 18*, 231-255

Hoffer, T.B. (1991, April). *The effects of ability grouping in middle school science and mathematics on students achievement*. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL

Jones, J.D., Erickson, E.L., & Crowell, R. (1972). Increasing the gap between whites and blacks: Tracking as a contributory source. *Education and Urban Society, 4*, 339-349

Joyce, B.R., Hersh, R. H., & McKibbin, M. (1983). *The structure of school improvement*. New York: Longman

Kulik, C., & Kulik, J. (1982). Effects of ability grouping on secondary school students: A meta-analysis of evaluation findings. *American Educational Research Journal, 19*, 415-428

Kulik, C., & Kulik, J. (1984a, August). *Effects of ability grouping on elementary school pupils: A meta-analysis*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Toronto

Kulik, C., & Kulik, J. (1984b). Effects of accelerated instruction on students. *Review of Educational Research, 54*, 409-425

MacIver, D.J. (1992). *Motivating disadvantaged students to reach new heights: Effective evaluation, reward, and recognition structures*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, Report # 32

Mikkelson, J.E. (1962). *An experimental study of selective grouping and acceleration in junior high school mathematics*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota

Morris, D., Shaw, B., & Perney, J. (1990) Helping low readers in grades 2 and 3: An after-school volunteer tutoring program. *Elementary School Journal, 91* (2), 132-150

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (1990). *The reading report card: Progress towards excellence in our schools*. (Report No. 15-R-01), Princeton: Educational Testing Service

Oakes, J. (1982). The reproduction of inequity: The content of secondary school tracking. *Urban Review, 14*, 107-120

Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Oakes, J. (1990). *Multiplying inequalities: The effects of race, social class and tracking on opportunities to learn mathematics and science*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Oakes, J. (1992). Grouping students for instruction. In M. Alkin (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (6th ed.). New York: Macmillan

Oakes, J. (1992). Foreword. In A. Wheelock, *Crossing the tracks: How "untracking" can save America's schools.* New York: New Press

Oakes, J., Gamoran, A., & Page, R. (1992). Curriculum differentiation: Opportunities, outcomes, and meanings. In P. Jackson (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Curriculum.* New York: Macmillan

Oakes, J., & Lipton, M. (1990). *Making the best of schools: A handbook for parents, teachers, and policymakers.* New Haven: Yale University Press

Oakes, J, & Lipton, M. (1992) Detracking schools: Early lessons from the field, *Phi Delta Kappan*

Oakes, J., & Lipton, M. (In press). Tracking and Unequal Opportunities to Learn: Changing the Culture of Testing and Sorting. In L. Rendon and R. Hope (Eds.) *Educating the new majority.* New York: Jossey-Bass

Oakes, J., Selvin, M., Karoly, L., & Guiton, G. (1992). *Educational matchmaking: Academic and vocational tracking in comprehensive high schools.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand

Ogletree, E.L. (1968). Research verifies ill effects of ability grouping on inner-city children. *Phi Delta Kappan, 50,* 223

Page, R., & Valli, L. (Eds.). (1990). *Curriculum differentiation: Interpretive studies in U.S. secondary schools.* Albany: SUNY Press

Palincsar, A.S. (1986). The role of dialogue in providing scaffolded instruction. *Educational Psychologist, 21,* 73-98

Persell, C.H. (1977). *Education and inequality: A theoretical and empirical synthesis.* New York: Free Press

Powell, A., Farrar, E., & Cohen, D.K. (1985). *The shopping mall high school.* Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin

Rosenbaum, J.E. (1976). *Making inequality: The hidden curriculum of high school tracking.* New York: Wiley

Rosenholtz, S.J., & Simpson, C. (1984). The formation of ability conceptions: Developmental trend or social construction?" *Review of Educational Research, 54,* 31-63

Sarthory, J.A. (1968). The effects of ability grouping in multicultural school situations. *Dissertation Abstracts, 29,* 451A (UMI No. 68-11, 664)

Schafer, W. & Olexa, C. (1971). *Tracking and opportunity: The locking-out process and beyond.* Scranton, PA: Chandler

Sharan, Y., & Sharan, S. (1992). *Group Investigation: Expanding Cooperative Learning.* New York: Teacher's College Press

Shepard, L. (In press). Readiness Testing in Local School Districts: An Analysis of Backdoor Policies. *Journal of Education Policy*

Silvernail, D., & Capelluti, J. (1991). An examination of the relationship between middle level school teachers' grouping preferences and their sense of responsibility for student outcomes. *Research in Middle Level Education, 15* (1)

Slavin, R.E. (1985). Cooperative learning: Applying contact theory in desegregated schools. *Journal of Social Issues, 41,* 45-62

Slavin, R.E. (1987). Ability grouping and student achievement in elementary schools: A best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 57,* 293-336

Slavin, R.E. (1990a). Ability grouping and student achievement in secondary schools: A best-evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 60,* 471-499

Slavin, R.E. (1990b). Ability grouping, cooperative learning, and the gifted. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 14,* 3-8

Slavin, R.E. (1990c). *Cooperative learning: Theory, research, and practice.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Slavin, R.E. (1991a). Are cooperative learning and untracking harmful to the gifted? *Educational Leadership, 48* (6), 68-71

Slavin, R.E. (1991b). *Educational psychology: Theory into practice* (3rd Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

Slavin, R.E., & Karweit, N.L. (1985). Effects of whole-class, ability grouped, and individualized instruction on mathematics achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 22,* 351-367

Slavin, R.E., Madden, N.A., & Leavey, M. (1984). Effects of Team Assisted Individualization on the mathematics achievement of academically handicapped and non-handicapped students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76,* 813-819

Stevens, R.J., Madden, N.A., Slavin, R.E., & Farnish, A.M. (1987). Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition: Two field experiments. *Reading Research Quarterly, 22,* 433-454

Useem, E. (1990, April). *Social class and ability group placement in mathematics in the transition to seventh grade: The role of parent involvement.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, MA

Villegas, A.M., & Watts, S.M. (1991, April). *Life in the classroom: The influence of class placement and student race/ethnicity.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL

Wenning, R. (1992). The characteristics and extent of discriminatory ability grouping. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA

Wheelock, Anne. (1992). *Crossing the tracks: How "untracking" can save America's schools.* New York: The New Press

Wiatrowski, M., Hansell, S., Massey, C.R., & Wilson, D.L. (1982). Curriculum tracking and delinquency. *American Sociological Review, 47,* 151-160

Wigdor, A.K., & Garner, W.R. (Eds.). (1982). *Ability testing: Uses, consequences, and controversies.* National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press

Appendix A

The Common Destiny Alliance (CODA)

WILLIS D. HAWLEY, *Director*
ALMA R. CLAYTON-PEDERSEN, *Assistant Director*

Center for Education and Human Development Policy
Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies
Box 516, Peabody College
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Organizational Partners[3]

American Association for Higher Education
American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education
American Association of School Administrators
American Council on Education
American Federation of Teachers
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Center for Bilingual and Bicultural Education and Research
Center for Research on Effective Schooling for the Disadvantaged
Children's Defense Fund
The College Board
Council of Chief State School Officers
Council of Great City Schools
Institute for Educational Leadership
Intercultural Development Research Associates
Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy, Inc.
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association for Gifted Children
National Association of Human Rights Workers
National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning
National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching
National Council of La Raza
National Education Association
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence
National Parent Teacher Association
National Urban Alliance for Educational Excellence
Parents for Public Schools
Southern Education Foundation
Teaching Tolerance
Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies

Research Partners[4]

Kathryn Au, Kamehameha Schools, Hawaii
James Banks, University of Washington-Seattle
JoMills Braddock, University of Miami
Reginald Clark, California State University-Fullerton
Elizabeth Cohen, Stanford University
Robert Crain, Teachers College, Columbia University
Lisa Delpit, Morgan State University
Edgar Epps, University of Chicago
Ricardo Fernandez, Lehman College
Doug Fuchs, Vanderbilt University
Lynn Fuchs, Vanderbilt University
Adam Gamoran, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Geneva Gay, University of Washington-Seattle
Carl Grant, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jennifer Hochschild, Princeton University
Jacqueline Irvine, Emory University
Geoffrey Maruyama, University of Minnesota
Milbrey McLaughlin, Stanford University
Richard Murnane, Harvard University
Susana Navarro, University of Texas-El Paso
Michael Nettles, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Jeannie Oakes, University of California-Los Angeles
John Ogbu, University of California-Berkeley
Gary Orfield, Harvard University
Thomas Pettigrew, University of California-Santa Cruz
Janet Schofield, University of Pittsburgh
Mark Smylie, University of Illinois-Chicago
William Trent, University of Illinois-Champaign/Urbana
Anne Wheelock, Massachusetts Advocacy Center
John Witte, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Kenneth Zeichner, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Consensus Panel Members

To maximize the reliability of the research syntheses prepared under CODA auspices, we assembled experts to review and critique the syntheses and to develop a consensus on the major point in the draft paper. The members of the Consensus Panel on tracking and ability grouping are:

JoMills Braddock, II, University of Miami
Edgar Epps, University of Chicago
Douglas Fuchs, Vanderbilt University
Susana Navarro, University of Texas—El Paso
Jeannie Oakes, University of California—Los Angeles
Robert Slavin, Johns Hopkins University
Anne Wheelock, Massachusetts Advocacy Center

3, 4 As of June 1993

APPENDIX B

Speakers and Workshop Presenters
The Common Destiny Conferece
September 9–11, 1992

Speakers

JoMills H. Braddock, II
University of Miami

Willis D. Hawley
Vanderbilt University

Norman Y. Mineta
U. S. House of Representatives
State of California

Jeannie Oakes
University of California-Los Angeles

Bryant Robinson, Jr.
Springfield (Massachusetts) Public Schools

Robert Slavin
Johns Hopkins University

Anne Wheelock
Massachusetts Advocacy Center

Effective Practice Workshop Presenters

M. J. Abbett Elementary School
Ft. Wayne, Indiana
Cornelia (Connie) Shideler, Principal
Judy Diagostino, "Success for All" Coordinator

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
San Diego County Office of Education
San Diego, California
Kathy Deering, AVID Resource Teacher

Burnett Academy
San Jose, California
Michael O'Kane, Principal

Carmen Arace Middle School
Bloomfield, Connecticut
Luba Pechenuk, Teacher

J. B. Castle High School
Kaneohe, Hawaii
Kathleen O'Malley, Teacher
Tracy Hathaway, Teacher

Crete-Monee Junior High School
Crete, Illinois
J. T. Crawford, Principal

Eakin Elementary School
Nashville, Tennessee
Pam Burish, Teacher

La Escuela Fratney (Fratney Elementary School)
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Rita Tenorio, Program Implementer

Louis Armstrong Middle School
East Elmhurst, New York
Elizabeth Ophals, Teacher and Dean of Students

Montgomery Knolls Elementary School
Silver Spring, Maryland
Pamela Prue, Principal
Dr. Waveline Starnes, Gifted Model Program
Sylvia de la Torre-Spencer, ESOL Teacher
Karen Bulman, Kindergarten Teacher
Barbara Williams, First Grade Teacher

Parkway South High School
Manchester, Missouri
Sarah Skidmore, Teacher

Walbrook Senior High School
Baltimore, Maryland
Samuel R. Billups, Principal

Willard Junior High School
Berkeley, California
Addie Holsing, Teacher

Common Destiny Alliance